Code: Red

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by Sulluspark

Summary

The next morning was dreadful. Both parents spent it sitting across from their son, patiently explaining that he was different from other kids his age, but that they would do their best to keep him protected and taken care of. Will didn't understand a lot of it, but he understood this much: he had strange powers and had to hide them if he didn't want to be taken away from his parents.

It was a necessary epiphany, but it still left him inconsolable for days. It was only when he saw the genuine fear in his mom's eyes and his father's disapproving stare that he agreed to eat and drink.

From there, he was then quickly advised to control his powers or hide away, lest the wrong people find out.

Little did Will know that this was only the start of his problems.

The Grahams always knew that there was something wrong with their son. From birth, he'd been a quiet child - some would even go so far as to say deadly silent. He never cried, rarely spoke, and slept a lot of the time. When they weren't closed, his bright blue eyes felt like they pierced through your soul, shining with an understanding that a newborn shouldn't even know about, much less possess.

The small family did their best to ignore it, as Will was their only son and there would be no more after him. Complications from his birth had resulted in Cheryl's sterile womb, which just made her all the more protective and unwilling to give up on him, no matter how many disturbing occurrences always seemed to happen when he was around.

However, it reached a point that the parents couldn't turn a blind eye anymore.

What at first started as unlocked doors that Liam had been sure he'd locked before putting Will to bed, quickly became levitating plates and smashed silverware. Whenever Will had a tantrum, the floor seemed to shake as if caused by an earthquake while the fire in their fireplace burned brighter and bathed them all in uncomfortable heat until the boy was calmed down again.

It was a pattern. Cheryl and Liam could no longer excuse it as coincidences when it was obvious what (or, rather, who) was causing all their troubles.

"No! I can't do it, Liam." Cheryl paced.

"It's for the best, Cheryl. We can't give him what he needs here!"

The two spoke in hushed voices, careful not to disturb their young child who was playing with his blocks in the living room. Some floated above him as he worked to construct his masterpiece, Will snatching them from the air to place them down contentedly.

He ignored his parents completely, just as they had given up paying attention to him because of their argument.

"And how do you know he won't be mistreated there? Haven't you seen the news about what do they do to others like him? He'll be treated like a freak, a monster!"

"I've seen those stories, honey, but it's the news. They're going to exaggerate-"

"I'm not going to gamble the life of our only son!" Her voice grew higher. "He stays here, and that's final!"

Liam sighed, but didn't argue anymore after that. If he knew his wife well, she wouldn't budge from her stance. She had put her foot down and that was that.

Unfortunately, her shrieking had finally drawn the attention of their son, but not in a good way. The silverware clanged against each other in the kitchen as the ground began to shake, starting small but slowly becoming more erratic. Cheryl hurried into the room, Liam hot on her trail, to see their son in front of his fallen block tower, eyes teary and lip quivering.

"Sshh. It's okay, baby." The blonde didn't hesitate to pick Will up, rocking her body in an effort to soothe him. He sniffed, clenching her shirt in between his little fingers, but the rumbling had thankfully stopped.

"W-why-" Cheryl gave Will an encouraging smile as he spoke. "W-why are you and Daddy fighting?"

"It's nothing, my little Will. Don't you worry about it. Your daddy and I just had an argument about what to make for dinner, that's all."

The boy frowned, seeing through the lies without meaning to. "But you and Daddy were yelling too much. A-and you never fight about food."

Liam chose this moment to appear, stepping up behind his wife to look over her shoulder at Will. "You're real smart, aren't ya, Will?" He said and received a big smile. "Well, you're right. Momma and I have something big to talk to you about."

Will leaned forward as Cheryl turned her head to glare at her husband, in protest of his plan. "What is it, Daddy?"

"Tell ya what: you eat dinner without asking us about it the rest of the night, and we'll tell you what it was about tomorrow morning?"

"But you're going to forget!" Will pouted and crossed his arms indignantly.

"How about I throw in a second bedtime story then? Would you like that?"

The boy took a moment to think about it, but eventually accepted. "Okay! But promise you won't forget!"

"I promise."

Liam smiled softly at his son as they linked their pinky fingers together. His wife could only shake her head as she bore witness to the cute scene with a fond gaze.

With the crisis now averted, Liam started on dinner as Cheryl sat Will on her lap to keep him entertained.

The next morning was dreadful. Both parents spent it sitting across from their son, patiently explaining that he was different from other kids his age, but that they would do their best to keep him protected and taken care of. Will didn't understand a lot of it, but he understood this much: he had strange powers and had to hide them if he didn't want to be taken away from his parents.

Restlessness soon turned into fear, which rattled the walls and added anxiety into the mix as Will saw the evidence to their statements with his own eyes. The blinders fell, exposing him to the ugly truth. He was not normal. He had never been normal. What he saw as an everyday part of life just wasn't for everyone else.

It was a necessary epiphany, but it still left him inconsolable for days. It was only when he saw the genuine fear in his mom's eyes and his father's disapproving stare that he agreed to eat and drink.

From there, he was then quickly advised to control his powers or hide away, lest the wrong people find out.

Little did Will know that this was only the start of his problems.

The family was, surprisingly, able to keep a low profile. It seemed that with every year that passed, Will's powers grew, and it was nothing short of a miracle that they had been able to feign being normal for so long. Despite his young age and his parents' relative cluelessness in how to deal with magic, the boy was able to rein in his powers to a manageable degree, enough to explain away the supernatural things that occurred around him and fool the neighbors.

Will was doing good - *great*, actually, considering the extent of his powers - until one day he came home to an eerily quiet house.

Every day, after being dropped off by the bus and walking the few blocks to his house, he was greeted by the low, soft tunes of the radio left on as background music. Sometimes, his mom would be cooking, and he could smell the spicy and comforting smell of Cajun food as he approached the door.

Today, though, there was nothing. The curtains were pulled closed and the lights left on, which didn't sit right with Will. His mom loved to feel the breeze and sunlight on her skin, so the house and curtains were nearly always open.

"Mom?" Will whispered uncertainly as he passed the threshold. Instantly, he was hit by a stench like something was rotting. The dread he'd been feeling grew tenfold as he frantically

searched the house for what was causing the smell.

When he finally found it, he wished he hadn't. In the living room were his parents, laying next to each other and surrounded by a pool of blood. Their eyes looked at Will unseeingly as he turned their faces toward him.

"No, no, no." The boy panicked, "This can't be happening. Mom, dad, wake up. *Wake up*." Sitting there, almost unable to breathe and with the cold, vice grip of despair closing around his heart, Will didn't notice the rumbling, like the very foundation of the house would give out any second. The intruders on the second floor, however, did.

"Please," Will cried, shaking as much as the house was.

Several sets of footsteps made their way down to the first floor as the intruders hugged the stair railing. At the sound, Will's eyes snapped forward to them. They stared at each other in silence, Will trying to understand their presence, the robbers confused at his and ready to depart the house that was clearly unstable. Will's eyes widened when finally connected the dots at the same time as the apparent leader pulled his gun out and aimed it at the boy, pressing the trigger without hesitation.

"You... you did this," Will said quietly as the bullet stopped several inches from his face. Panicked, the leader of the intruders fired off more shots, each one unable to hit its target as if caught with some invisible force.

The darkness in Will's eyes grew as he felt something in him breaking. His fragile control over his powers snapped and chaos followed. The fireplace roared to life, the flames expanding uncontrollably. They licked at the walls and engulfed the broken home as well as all others in the surrounding area.

Will didn't know how long he sat there for. He felt numb. Though he could clearly hear the sirens as emergency personnel quickly swarmed his neighborhood, he couldn't respond. Didn't want to.

They called for him, when the flames were all put out, and attempted to approach him. They couldn't; somewhere in between, he'd managed to pull some of the flames to him, encircling him like a vortex while bits of the ground hovered around him in alternating patterns.

He could hear voices, but none of them really reached him.

Until, finally, one broke through his haze.

The man was handsome, with sharp lines and classical European features. Despite the mess Will was presenting, he didn't cower back in fear that Will would lash out. His eyes, stern but

warm, held eye contact with Will.

"You poor thing. You must be tired from keeping this up for so long."

Will didn't know why, but he felt he could trust him. "I can't - I can't make it stop," he said weakly.

"Okay, Will. I'm going to help you, I promise, but I need you to listen to me," the man said firmly, "Are you listening?" Will nodded, fearfully wide eyes practically reeking of desperation, and the man immediately softened. Even though he was able to cause such destruction, Will was still just a child. He was overwhelmingly powerful and didn't know how to control himself - not yet, at least.

"I want you to close your eyes, Will. Then, imagine yourself at that place that brings you the most peace," he spoke over the roar of the flames. With no other alternative, Will complied, shutting his eyes. Immediately, the scorched earth and smell of charred grass disappeared, replaced by the sound of rushing water. "Good, Will. Now wade into the quiet of the stream," Will heard through his trance-like state. For a long time, there was nothing but himself and the stream. And when the sounds started to dissipate, Will opened his eyes to meet warm brown ones, this time unobstructed by the glaring red of fire.

Will froze, surprised.

"You're special, Will. There are very few with powers as strong as yours," the man explained. "I know it's frightening, feeling like you're not in control of yourself, anxious for the next time you'll snap and accidentally kill people... that's what I'm here for. I can help you; in fact, I have a nephew that I've supported ever since his powers manifested. So, what do you say? Will you allow me to help you?"

Looking around at the damaged land and cowering audience around him, Will didn't think there was any decision to be made. He took the man's hand. "I have nowhere else to go," he said bitterly.

The man smiled. "Robertus Lecter. It's nice to meet you too, Will."

With his guidance, Will would flourish. He would learn to wield his powers, razor-sharp and deadly, and no one would be able to stop them.

Will's first few weeks at Lecter manor were jarring. Nightmares plagued his nights, resulting in little to no sleep for the boy, and even bled into his waking hours. He was prone to outbursts, all of which cost Robertus a pretty penny, but he was patient, and it seemed that with each flare-up, Will grew more determined to keep control of his powers.

Still, though he had the drive, Will continued to look haggard and was perpetually weary, no doubt haunted by the ghosts of his parents and the warm affection they always readily gave him. Though Robertus was nice and wanted the best for him, he was not the type to offer him the kind of comfort he craved, the one he took for granted with his parents.

Robertus was worried the boy would continue to deteriorate and all his efforts be for naught - but then something magical happened.

His nephew Hannibal came to visit for the holidays, where he'd been surprised by Will's presence in the house as Robertus may have neglected to inform him of his new housemate. However, completely unexpectedly, Hannibal had smiled and spent the rest of that night talking with Will, who seemed to have latched onto the teen in turn.

They formed a most-unlikely pair. Hannibal, with his detached attitude and person suit which deformed from time to time with anger and vengeance, who was so carefully aloof that Robertus thought he would never be able to get along with others, much less have a friend. Then there was Will, with his tortured mind often sending him spiraling and a penchant for self-loathing, Robertus thought he would never be able to pull himself out of it long enough to form connections in the real, outside world.

And yet, there they were. Against all odds, they not only seemed to get along, but became close enough over the years that they made their relationship official.

Robertus and his wife were happy for them, of course. Will was progressing steadily in his training with Hannibal there by his side, and Hannibal was the happiest, and dare he say most *amiable*, he had been since he found him at that orphanage and took him home.

Nature had its ways, and Robertus was content with how it had panned out for him and his family.

"Doing alright, Will?"

The teen's head snapped up from where it had been hanging to the side. "Hn? Yeah, 'm okay. Just tired." This was punctuated by a yawn, disturbing the peaceful and constant sound of wheels on stone. Hannibal hummed as he continued to push the wheelchair while Will simply enjoyed the ride, taking in the breeze and noise of wildlife surrounding the mansion's large garden.

Soon after Will had begun training, Robertus and Hannibal noticed the teen growing extremely weary. He stumbled a lot, would frequently blink in an effort to keep his eyes from drooping further, and sometimes couldn't find the strength to lift his arms. The final straw had been when he passed out in a dead faint, almost dashing his head against the stone walkway if Hannibal hadn't intervened. From then on, the two Lecters decided to get him a wheelchair

for his own safety, allowing him to rest after his tiring training sessions where he put his mind to the limit.

"Do you want to sleep before having dinner?"

Will rolled his eyes, "I'm not a toddler, Hannibal. I'll be okay to stay up for a few more hours, at least."

"I'm simply concerned for your health, darling. I know using your powers can be draining." Hannibal frowned. "You mustn't push yourself. We don't want another accident to happen, do we?"

"That was years ago, Hannibal! The two of you will never let it go, will you?"

"Your health comes above everything else, darling Will."

And, immediately, any lingering irritation disappeared as Will registered the other's fond tone. The telekinetic was sure that his boyfriend didn't even notice the way his voice softened whenever he spoke with and about Will. He certainly wouldn't be the one to tell him; he quite liked being the other teen's center of affection.

"You're such a sap," Will replied, words contrasting with his bright smile.

Both basked in the other's presence as they leisurely made their way back into the mansion, Hannibal refusing to let Will levitate them up the stairs and insisting on using the elevator instead so he could save his strength. Will indulged him, though he was certainly more alert and vitalized now with his good mood.

Will opened the door to his room with his powers, ignoring Hannibal's disapproving look, and launched himself onto his bed. He giggled as the bed bounced him back up while Hannibal heaved a very put-upon sigh, though his eyes danced with amusement as he sat next to Will on the side of the bed.

"Mm." Will mumbled as Hannibal brushed a hand through his wild curls. "On second thought, fuck dinner. Get over here and sleep with me."

Will immediately turned red as Hannibal chuckled, getting a pillow thrown at his face none-too-gently.

"Shut up! You know what I meant!"

The singular light from the desk bathed the room with ominous feeling, shadows stretching across the walls. Despite this, Jack strode forward confidently, meeting eyes with the serious

woman sat across from him. As soon as he sat down, a manila folder was dropped on the desk, landing with a heavy smack. Without hesitation, Jack picked it up and began rifling through it as his boss briefed him.

There were no pleasantries exchanged, the tension too thick with the magnitude of their task.

"Is this everything we have on him?"

Kade pursed her lips and nodded. "Unfortunately, the Lecters are being very secretive where their charge is concerned. I don't know how many we've lost retrieving just that small amount of information," she nodded toward the folder still in Jack's hands, "So many have went missing, and I know that Lecter has something to do with it, but that man is more slippery than an eel."

"I see." Jack frowned consideringly. "And you're sure we have enough people for this?"

"If by enough, you mean enough people to make up a quarter of the entire army of the United States, then yes, we have *enough*."

Though that piece of information released some of the pressure, Jack could still feel the crushing weight of expectations and desperation. And most prominently - the fear of failure. So many men could and would probably lose their lives to this mission. He couldn't help but sigh.

Kade's eyes hardened. "Jack, are you up to the task or not?"

"I am, I am... just. It's a lot to ask," Jack laughed wryly.

"I know," the woman whispered, afraid to scare him away. "But they're a danger to the world. William's powers are in the wrong hands. You'd be saving an innocent."

At that, Jack nodded resolutely. It was the entire reason he had gotten himself involved in this business: all in the name of protecting people, saving lives. Even if it was at the cost of others. "Are there any restrictions?"

"No. You can do whatever you need to do, just capture the asset at all costs."

"Alright," he said as he got up. "If that's all, then I'll be going."

Kade nodded and watched him go. He was reaching for the door handle when she spoke up again.

"Oh, and Jack?" The man turned. "Do be careful. You're one of my best. Don't let them catch you; I've heard it's a fate worse than death."

The words, coming from such a force of nature herself, made Jack shiver.

Will jolted forward with a gasp. A quick glance to his right told him it was only 4 in the morning. The blinds were still closed and the lights turned off, keeping the room in darkness. It took him a second to adjust to it, but he was quickly able to spy the outline of Hannibal next to him, asleep but clearly troubled. In sleep, his face displayed his every emotion, and judging by the furrowed eyebrows and tight frown, it wasn't anything good.

Will suddenly understood why Hannibal had been so hesitant to share a bed with him despite their close relationship, always waiting until Will had fallen asleep to slip out of his room.

The telekinetic gained a new appreciation for the vulnerability Hannibal was entrusting him with - and he would guard it with his life.

"Hannibal," Will whispered, reaching a hand out to wake the other man up. As soon as his fingers grazed Hannibal's arm, he snapped into action, pushing Will down into the sheets. The brunette, shocked by the painful grip on his shoulders and the feral look on Hannibal's face, gave little resistance. Will sought the familiar maroon eyes, but couldn't find his partner within its depths.

This person holding him down and hurting him was not the same person he fell in love with, and this realization stayed his hand from a more forceful reaction. Instead, he closed his eyes and willed himself to *see*. Fortunately, with the fractured state Hannibal's mind was currently in, he didn't have to do a lot of pushing to break through his normally indestructible defense.

When he next opened his eyes, he was met with snow blowing into and around him. The cold immediately greeted his skin and burrowed inside, rendering his veins into ice. In the distance, nearly hidden by the curtains of falling snow, he could see a small figure hunched over a larger one.

The brunette felt an inexplicable urge to go to them, so he did.

He left footprints in the snow as he approached. When he was within a few feet from the boy, he stopped, surprised that there was no reaction even though he had made no effort to be silent. Cautiously, he made his way to the other side of what he could now observe was a dead body, trying to catch a glimpse of the boy's face.

"Hey," Will said, kneeling in the snow directly in front of him. At that, the blonde's head slowly raised. Will's earlier suspicion of the boy's lack of reaction was disproven, as he could now clearly see the tense shoulders and the gleam of distrust and rage in his eyes now that they were looking at each other. Neither said anything for a while, but Will knew, without a doubt, that this small blonde boy was *his* Hannibal. And that this was a defining moment in his life.

He couldn't have chosen a better moment to snap him out of it than this. But he had to be careful.

"Did you kill him?" The boy nodded mutely.

Will smiled. "Good." He could tell that the boy hadn't expected that response, because he tilted his head and regarded him curiously. Sharp eyes followed his every move as he picked up a sharp rock and began to tear into the corpse, retrieving the heart.

Will held it out to the young, emerging killer that was his Hannibal, and hoped to see his lover soon.

He had just enough time to see the boy take it and bite a piece off before he was abruptly pulled out of the memory, meeting the face of Hannibal, eyes now clear and filled with worry when he noticed a river of tears flowing down Will's face.

"Will? Will, what's wrong?"

Will shook his head and didn't even bother wiping his face before throwing his arms around Hannibal's neck now that his arms were free. "I'm sorry," he just barely managed to choke out, and Hannibal somehow understood.

He simply held his darling close.

Robertus saw the cars approaching from the distance. The jet black paint and choice not to use headlights were a nice touch, but it was still a pitiful attempt at sneaking up on him. He smirked; things were about to get interesting.

Leisurely, he strolled down the stairs and into the right wing of the mansion where the grand ballroom was. Will and Hannibal were there, as he predicted, swaying back to the gentle tones of classical music. Their eyes immediately flew to him at his entrance.

Robertus couldn't help the soft look that took over his face, but it was gone almost as quickly as it appeared, reverting to one he saved for serious situations. "I'm sorry to interrupt boys, but we have company."

"What kind, uncle?"

"The pesky kind, that's what. They must be here for Will."

"Well, that's too bad," Will said haughtily. "I'm not going anywhere with them."

"Of course not, darling." The two shared a loving look.

Robertus cleared his throat. "Shall we let them know, then?"

"We shall," Hannibal nodded.

"I will take care of the ones who will be coming from the back. I assume the two of you will be fine taking the front?" The two nodded and bid the elder goodbye as they prepared to part ways.

"Take care of him, Hannibal. He's who they want."

"They would be lucky to come within feet of Will with life still coursing through them," Hannibal affirmed. He watched as the outline of his uncle slowly disappeared, then he turned to his beloved. "We should go too, darling. It would be rude to keep them waiting."

"It's also rude to come barging into someone's house and force one of them to come with you against their will," the brunette snarked from his seat, the wheels of it the only sound in the silent and dimmed mansion. They continued to bicker with each other until they reached the foyer, voices petering off until they both were silent. Will began fidgeting, restless, while Hannibal was still as a statue with his eyes were trained on the entrance.

Fortunately for Will, they weren't kept waiting for long.

It was chaos. A barrage of people blew through the doors, most of them meeting their end by one of Hannibal's blades or Will's telekinetic powers crushing their body from the inside out. Finally, when the horde seemed to have slowed down, they were met with a large man with determined, but weary eyes. Immediately, they sought Will out, who seemed surprised at the willing eye contact.

"It doesn't have to be like this, William. You can come with us and no one else needs to get hurt."

Will frowned. "That's not my name. And the only people getting hurt here are *your* men."

Jack grimaced. "I hoped you wouldn't say that. But you've left me no choice."

Will tensed, prepared to do the same to the man that he did to the others, but a loud screeching noise halted him. He shouted and put his hands to his ears while he held his head down, but it didn't lessen the pain at all. Hannibal was instantly at his side, having discarded the corpse of a man he had just been fighting, and reached a hand out to soothe the rigid body of his partner.

"Will! Will! Please look at me, honey."

Blue eyes met maroon ones. "Hannibal, it's so *loud*. Make it stop!"

Hannibal turned around, searching for the cause of his darling's distress, and zeroed in on the small, metal object in Jack's hand. He growled, ready to lunge, when he registered a grenade coming their way. He quickly dived out of the way as it exploded and waited for the smoke to clear. When it finally did, it revealed a gaping crack in the floor, separating him from Will.

The telekinetic was looking at him with wide eyes. Hannibal shook his head. "Take this opportunity and go, love! Meet me at the training room, you know the way."

"But I don't want to leave you!"

"You must, Will. I don't know what they did to you, but it can't happen again," Hannibal steeled himself from the sad cries. "Don't worry - I will meet you there, okay?"

Will's eyes glistened with unshed tears, but he nodded. Without another glance, he quickly turned his wheelchair around and fled further into the mansion, leaving Hannibal to face off against the remaining men and Jack.

Will arrived at the training room without interruption, breathing hard. He could feel a panic attack coming on, having never been separated from Hannibal for any amount of time since they met, and certainly not forcefully. He gulped, trying to get in as much air as he could, knowing that this was the worst time for this.

When he regained a semblance of breath, the doors opened and groups of men stormed in. They must have broken into every room of the mansion searching for him. Well, they found him, alright, and he would make sure they regret it.

"You - you! Hannibal isn't where he's supposed to be because of you!" Will ranted, eyes glowing a brighter blue. "Die, you filthy pigs! How dare you come in here and try to ruin everything!"

He finally allowed the chain on his powers that he had imposed himself loose. The men were soon reduced to nothing but a pile of bones and ash, but it only enraged Will further.

His eyes were still blazing blue when hurried footsteps made their way into the room. Jack surveyed the scene and became eerily still, eyes wide.

"Monster!" Jack yelled, gun pointed at Will. "There's no saving you! You'll kill everyone if I let you live!"

Everything happened as if in slow motion. Again, that disarming noise was back, forcing Will to draw into himself. Then, there was the distinct sound of a bullet. This was followed by a very familiar voice, which focused Will's attention just enough to tune back into the fight.

Hannibal was sprinting toward him, lips forming the word "No," but Will didn't understand what for until it was too late. He wanted his body to move, but he his limbs were frozen, and he could only watch as his lover was struck and collapsed.

This time, it was Will screaming the word "No," hysterically, launching himself at the crumpled form.

Robertus, who had just arrived early enough to witness it all, could see that Will was unraveling and fast. "Remember what we practiced, Will!" He tried to get to the man he saw

as his second son, but knew he wouldn't make it, even if there wasn't a forcefield around the two. "Will, don't-"

Will wasn't paying attention. Fat tears rolled down his cheeks as he felt the last of his carefully-enforced control wither away, like Hannibal was in his arms.

"Don't leave me, Hannibal. Please."

A shaky arm reached up to wipe his tears away. "I will always be with you, *mylimasis*. Whether I'm physically present or not."

Will shook his head vigorously. "No, no, this is all wrong. Tonight shouldn't have ended like this. I should have been able to protect you, Hannibal," he cried. "It can't be true. This can't be *real*."

"Will, it's-"

"I'm going to fix this." From behind the curtain of tears, Hannibal could see Will's determined blue eyes. He forgot what he was going to say. At that moment, he couldn't think about how ominous that statement was, couldn't think about anything other than how pretty those blue orbs were. About how pretty Will was and how beautiful their children - no. He stopped that train of thought before they could stray down the path of misery and anger at the world for having cut their time together short.

The space behind Will seemed to distort like a cracked mirror. Hannibal would think he’s being greeted by death, except the crack just seemed to get bigger and bigger. Until there was pieces of what could only be called their world floating in the air. Gaps of black nothingness appeared where they splintered off.

Robertus and Jack could only gape at the literal fracturing of their reality.

The last thing Hannibal sees before he succumbs is Will’s bitter smile.

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